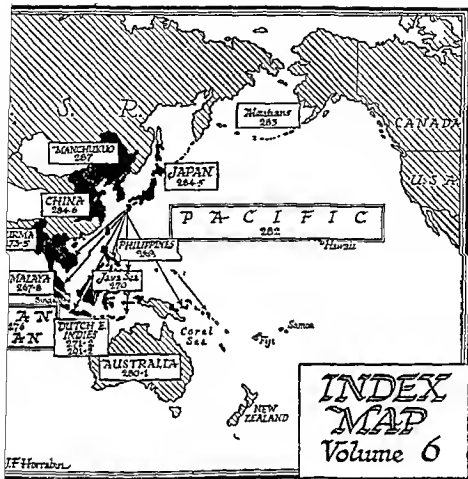


The War of the



Three Oceans

Vol. VI—January to July 1942

AN ATLAS-HISTORY OF
THE SECOND GREAT WAR

by
J. F. HORRABIN

*Govindlal Shirlal,
Motilal, Bombay*

30 JUN RECD

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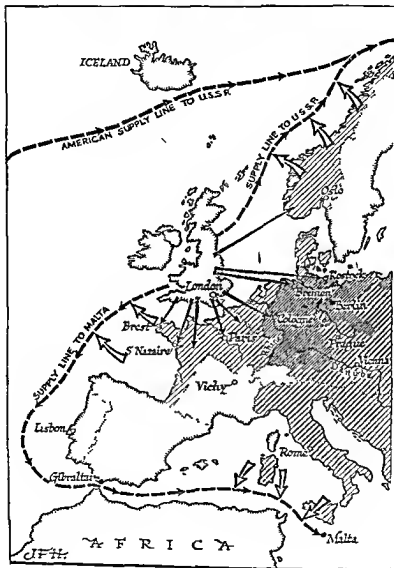
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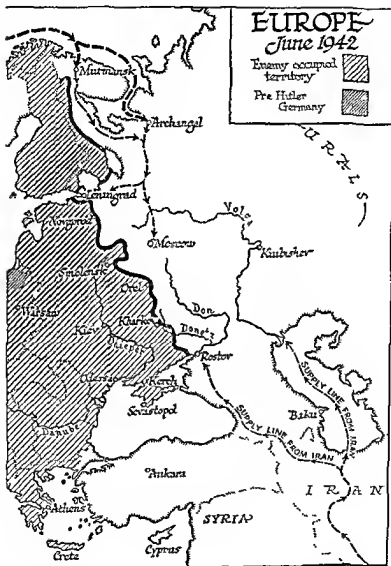
SOVIET RUSSIA has always laid stress on the use and virtue of "self criticism" Certainly the British people at the end of the first six months of 1942 had good reason for that particular form of mental exercise The period which began with the fall of Singapore, followed by the loss of Burma, and the consequent threats to India and Australia, ended with Rommel's drive into Egypt and the loss of Tobruk The debates in both Houses of Parliament at the beginning of July gave expression to widespread public concern over many aspects of the national war effort But if the mood of the British people was critical, it was none the less determined Perhaps by the time this volume is in print further events will have translated that determination into satisfying action

July 1942

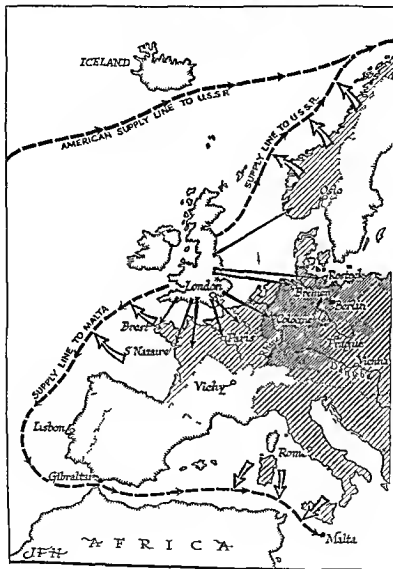
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Summer, 1942—



(See next page)



Summer, 1942—



(See next page)

The European Fronts : Summer, 1942—

THE first six months of 1942 saw no such dramatic developments of the war in Europe as had marked the corresponding period in 1940, when the Nazis swept over Scandinavia, the Low Countries, and France, or 1941, which saw their drive through the Balkans to Crete and the beginning of their great offensive against the Soviet Union. If the initiative could hardly be said as yet to have passed to the Allies, at least it was no longer entirely Hitler's.

The eastern front had seen no movement on a large scale since the gradual slowing down of the Red Army's winter counter offensive. Leningrad still held out, and only at the end of June, after a siege lasting eight months, were the brave defenders of Sevastopol forced to evacuate the fortress. In May, Marshal Timoshenko forestalled a German offensive in the south by attacking north and south of Kharkov. But the offensive materialized in the first days of July, when Von Bock's armies launched a determined drive towards the Don.

In the west, the R A F increased both the weight and the frequency of its raids on enemy bases and industrial centres, culminating in the 1,000 bomber raids during May and June on Cologne, Essen, and Bremen. Coastal

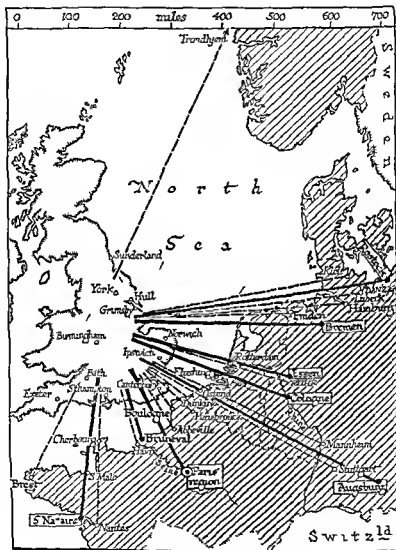
and Bomber Command aircraft kept up their attacks on enemy shipping and their work of sowing mines in enemy waters ; British fighters continued almost daily their sweeps over northern France.

The Germans made desperate efforts to break the supply line between Britain and the U.S.S.R., fiercely attacking convoys from their bases on the Norwegian coast. But though they succeeded in sinking some vessels the convoys delivered 90 per cent of their cargoes at Murmansk and Archangel.

The supply line to Malta was also kept open, despite determined enemy attack in the narrows between Sardinia, Sicily, and the north African coast. Malta, itself enduring raids innumerable, maintained its heroic resistance.

Besides the eastern and western fronts there was, too, a third front—the front of “the silent peoples” under the Nazi heel all over Europe. It was estimated that close on 400,000 Frenchmen, Czechs, Greeks, Dutchmen, Yugoslavs, and Poles had so far been executed by the Nazis in their campaign to force acceptance of the New Order.

On 11th June Mr. Eden announced in Parliament the signature of an Anglo-Soviet Treaty in London by M. Molotov on 26th May. He referred also to the full understanding reached during the conversations as to “the urgent task of creating a second front in Europe in 1942”



Air War in the West—

A BARE list of R.A.F. attacks on enemy targets, January-June 1941, would run to pages. Outstanding raids included that on Augsburg (17th April) when in daylight twelve Lancasters flew at roof-top height all the 500-odd miles to their target, the Diesel engine works, only five of the twelve returning ; on the Renault works at Billancourt, the Gnome-Rhone works at Gennevilliers, and the Matford works at Poissy—all in the Paris region , and on the Heinkel factory and the shipyards at Rostock, repeated four nights running (24th-27th April). In May and June came the great 1,000-bomber raids on Cologne, Essen, and Bremen. On 11th July Lancaster bombers raided Danzig in daylight.

Combined raids by lands, sea, and air forces were carried out on Bruneval, near Havre (27th February) ; St. Nazaire (27th March) when the dock-gates were rammed and blown up by the former U.S. destroyer *Campbelltown*, with five tons of explosives in her bows ; and two raids on the coast near Boulogne (22nd April and 4th June).

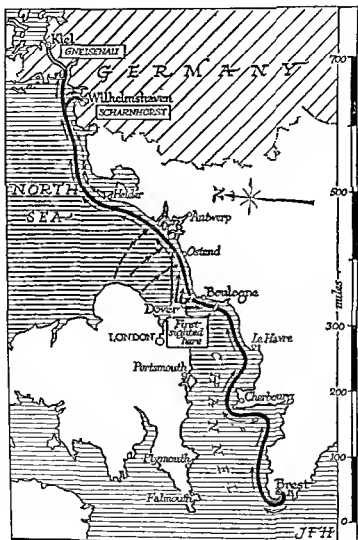


Bombing Germany's Baltic Bases—

THE R.A.F. raids on Lübeck and Rostock in April were directly aimed at hindering and damaging German preparations for a renewal of the offensive against the U.S.S.R. Both ports are bases of supply for the northern sectors of the German eastern front. During the four successive night raids on Rostock nearly 800 tons of bombs were dropped.

It was in reprisal for these raids that the Luftwaffe carried out the so-called "Baedeker" raids on places of especial historic interest in Britain—Bath, Exeter, York, and Canterbury among them.

On 11th July Lancaster bombers raided Flensburg and Danzig—the latter being the farthest distance bombing raid of the war.

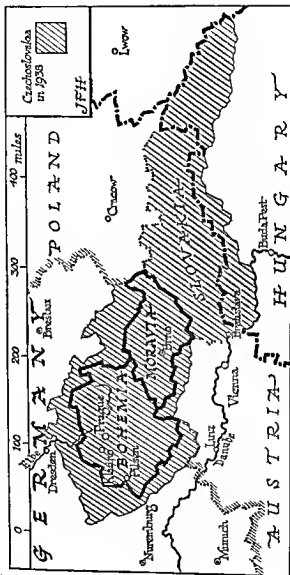


“Scharnhorst” and “Gneisenau”—

For months the German battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and the cruiser *Prinz Eugen* had lain at Brest. Again and again R A F bombers had raided the docks and the port. (In his statement in Parliament on 17th February Mr Churchill stated that 3,299 bomber “sorties” had been made and some 4,000 tons of bombs dropped, with the loss, during ten months, of 247 men and 43 aircraft.)

On 12th February the three ships, escorted by destroyers, E-boats, and mine-sweepers, and with a strong force of coast based fighter planes, were sighted just south of Boulogne. Six Swordfish of the Fleet Air Arm at once attacked from Dover. None of them returned. R A F bombers escorted by fighters next took up the attack, and claimed hits with torpedoes. Destroyers from the North Sea engaged the enemy off the Dutch coast, but run squalls and bad visibility made accurate firing difficult.

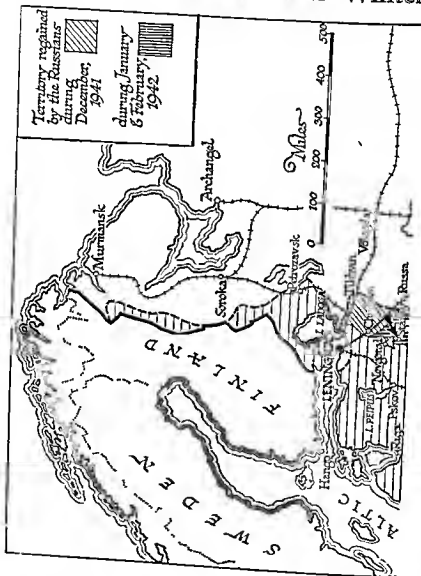
The enemy ships got through to Wilhelmshaven and Kiel.



The Terror in Czechoslovakia—

HEYDRICH, Hitler's chief of the Gestapo in the Occupied Countries, and "Protector" of Czechoslovakia, was shot in Prague on 27th May and died a few days later. Within a week of his death the Nazis had executed more than 300 Czechs, 45 of them women, on suspicion of being associated with his killing. One whole village—Lidice—near Kladno—was erased from the map, its men all shot, its women sent to concentration camps, and its children to "educational centres."

Heydrich, who had earned the name of "the Butcher of Moravia" since he went to Czechoslovakia to carry through a campaign of repression, had previously been responsible for the seizure and shooting of hostages in France and other German-occupied lands. He was given a state funeral in Berlin at which Hitler pinned the highest German order on the dead man's tunic, and Himmler delivered an oration acclaiming Heydrich as "one of our martyrs"



Russia: The Winter Counter-Offensive—

THROUGHOUT the first two months of 1942, despite a winter which the German propagandists declared to be the worst known since Napoleon's time, the Russians carried on ceaseless counter-offensives all along the whole front from Leningrad to the Sea of Azov. Again and again Berlin announced that the "winter line" had been reached and would now be held; again and again it had to be explained that further "adjustments" were necessary, and that the winter line, which was "elastic," would be defined when the armies had withdrawn to it.

South of Novgorod the Russians drove westward to a point west of Smolensk, 60 miles to the north of that town; and then pushed southward towards the Moscow-Smolensk railway. From the Kaluga region they advanced north-westward towards the same rail-line, leaving Rzhev and Viasma enclosed within a great double salient (see Map 263). During February they surrounded large German forces at Staraya Russa, to the north of this zone, but were unable completely to reduce this strong point.

Meantime the siege of Leningrad continued. Fresh troops and new supplies of material were carried to the city across the ice of Lake Ladoga (see Map 261); and the enemy's efforts to put a ring round the city were defeated.

South-west of Moscow the Red Armies advanced from the Kaluga-Tula area towards Briansk and Orel.

Marshal Timoshenko's forces pushed westward from Yelets towards the Orel-Kursk-Kharkov railway, reaching the suburbs of the latter city during January. South of Kharkov, in the vital Donetz area, two big offensives in the general direction of the Dnieper bend cleared important industrial areas, and at the end of January it was announced from Moscow that many mines had been restarted. Attacks were made across the ice of the Sea of Azov west of Taganrog ; but the Germans could not be dislodged from that town.

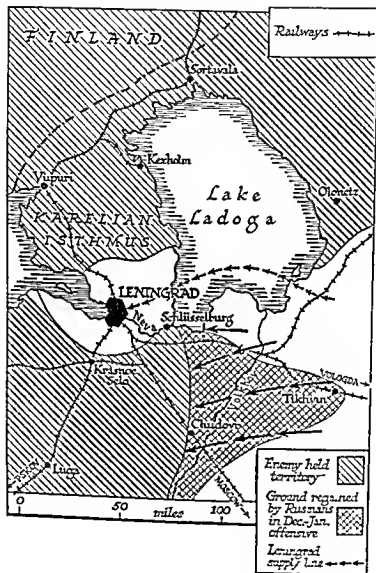
In the Crimea the Russians held on to Kerch, and the siege of Sevastopol continued.

The two months showed total territorial gains approximately equal to those made during the earlier stages of the counter-offensive in December.



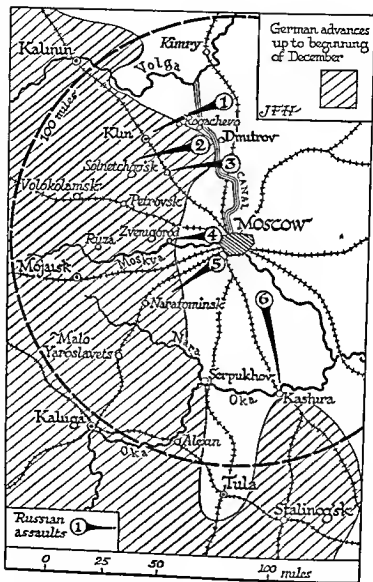
German Key-Points on the Eastern Front—

THOUGH the German winter line fluctuated considerably, Hitler's armies succeeded in holding on to certain strong points marking a zone stretching south and south-east from Schlüsselburg, east of Leningrad, to Taganrog, on the Sea of Azov. The Russians pushed westward between and beyond these in various sectors. They cut off Staraya Russa completely for a time, and penetrated to areas 150 miles west of Rzhev and Viasma. Mojausk, the German stronghold nearest to Moscow, was captured during January. South of the capital their advance carried them well to the west of Orel; but the German Orel-Kursk-Kharkov front held. Between Kharkov and Taganrog, in the Donetz area, Russian offensives drove two great salients into the German defences.



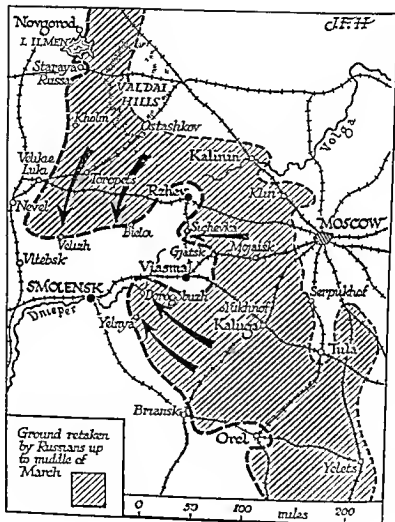
Leningrad Holds Out—

THE Russian counter-offensive of December, beginning with the capture of Tikhvin, on the Vologda railway, had crossed the river Volkhov and brought the Soviet forces to the southern shore of Lake Ladoga, to within a few miles of Schlüsselburg, 25 miles east of Leningrad. Now that winter had come a railway was run across the ice of the lake, and fresh supplies and troops reached the beleaguered city. German troops replaced the Finnish forces operating in the Karelian isthmus, but all attacks from this direction were held ; as were German-Finnish offensives farther east, in the Olonetz region on the farther side of the lake.



The Battle of Moscow—

THE German threat to Moscow during November (1941) was even greater than had appeared from the original *communiqués*. Compare this map with No 222 (Vol. V) Fuller details published later in Moscow stated that the farthest German advance actually reached the Moscow-Volga canal, north of the city, and extended to Zvenigorod, about 20 miles due west of the capital. South of Moscow and to the east of Tula the Germans had pushed up as far as the river Oka, at Kashira. The map shows the six main Russian offensives which ultimately pushed back the invaders to beyond the 100-mile radius

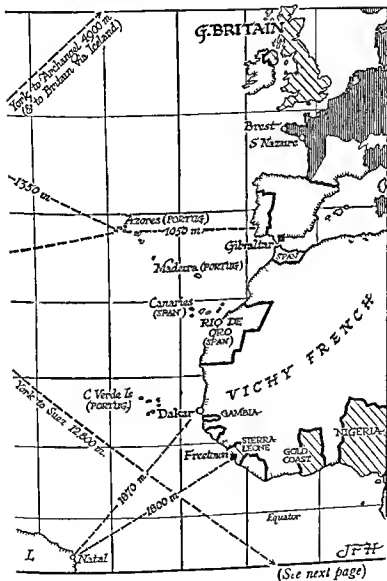


Pressure towards Smolensk—

At the beginning of January the Russians had driven back the Germans in the Moscow region some 50 miles west of Kalinin and of Kaluga. Between these points Mojaïsk still held out. After fierce fighting it was captured on 19th January. By that date the Russian advance from Kalinin had been reinforced by a drive westward from the Valdai Hills, and Kholm had been reached. Then the Soviet forces struck southward, crossing the Velikie Luki-Rzhev railway and advancing to a line running some 60 miles to the north of Smolensk. During February the Red Armies operating from the Kaluga region had broken through to Dorogobuzh and the Smolensk-Viasma railway. The Germans in Rzhev and Viasma were thus almost surrounded. But they contrived to keep the gap open, and to maintain their position in both towns.



the Atlantic—



The Battle of the Atlantic—

THE entry of the United States into the war brought the whole of the North Atlantic, from west to east, into the war zone. Early in January German U-boats were reported off the Atlantic coast of the U.S., and by March and April they were active also in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. On 20th June the U.S. Navy Department announced that to that date the total number of Allied ships lost in American waters, including the Caribbean, was 286. This figure did not include many neutral vessels attacked and sunk—Brazilian, Chilean, Mexican, Swedish, etc.

The first warship to be attacked in the Caribbean was the U.S. destroyer *Blakeley*, torpedoed 26th May. At various times islands of the West Indies were shelled.

On 1st April the Navy Department announced that nineteen Axis U-boats had to that date been sunk in the Atlantic. Early in May, Ottawa announced the sinking of two cargo steamers in the St. Lawrence River.

At a press conference on his return in June from a visit to the U.S., Mr. Oliver Lyttleton, the British Minister of Production, said: "I can't promise that we shall get shipping adequate for all our needs, but I am sure we are going to catch up rapidly on our shipping losses." Shipbuilding in America, he said, was just beginning to flow on an enormous scale. The shipping problem, it was stated, was one of the main subjects discussed by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill during the latter's visit to Washington in June.

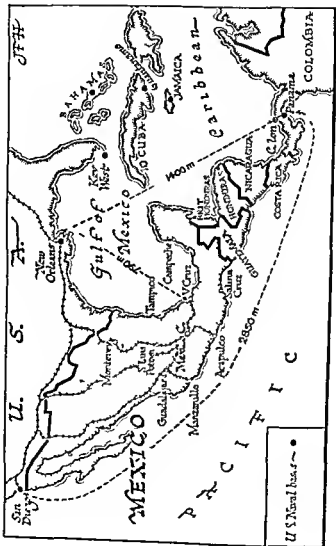
Yet despite the desperate efforts made by Nazi air and sea forces to interrupt all Atlantic transport, the first contingent of American troops, "the vanguard of a great army," landed in Northern Ireland during January; and later convoys brought more men, planes, and machines to the *European front*



French Islands in the West Indies—

THE activities of German U-boats in the Gulf of Mexico, and the declared collaboration policy of M. Laval, led to the United States Government taking steps to prevent the French West Indian islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique being used as enemy bases. Actual U.S. occupation of the islands was undesirable in view of Latin-American opinion. A mission was accordingly sent to Admiral Robert, the High Commissioner, to discuss arrangements for their neutralization; and the American Government insisted on negotiating with Admiral Robert directly and not with the Laval Government.

Guadeloupe and Martinique are situated at the eastern end of the Caribbean, and lie between Antigua and St. Lucia, the British islands on which bases have been leased to the United States.

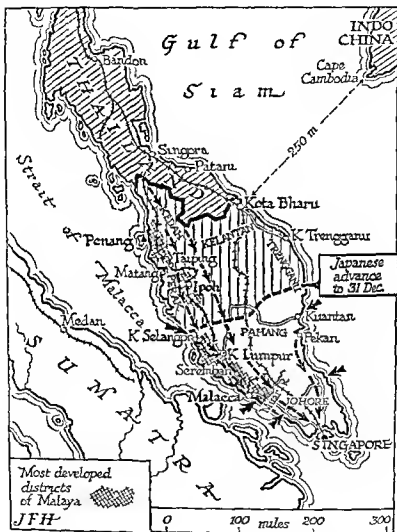


Mexico declares War on the Axis—

POPULAR indignation had risen high in Mexico over the sinking of Mexican tankers by German U-boats. Protests to the German Government having brought no satisfactory reply, President Camacho, on 28th May, asked for a special session of Congress to declare war on the Axis. The Chamber of Deputies approved of the declaration by 108 votes to none, the Senate by 53 to none; and on 1st June war was formally declared.

Mexico is second in population and third in size of the Latin-American republics, and her strategic position, with both Pacific and Atlantic coastlines, is important. Work was at once begun on a plan for the establishment of coastal naval and air bases to be carried out in co-operation with the United States.

Mexico's oil-fields form an important part of the American oil zone, comprising the southern United States, and the north-eastern States of South America, Colombia, and Venezuela.

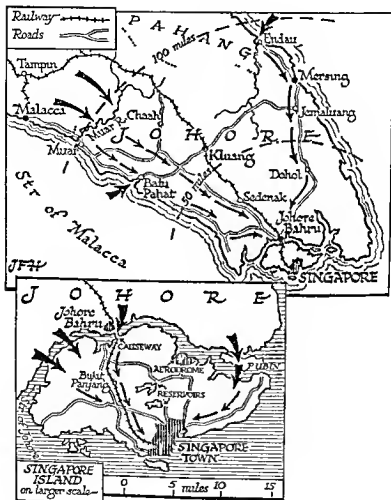


The Conquest of Malaya—

By 31st December the Japanese had advanced roughly half-way down the Malay Peninsula. Their main attack had been down the western side, through the more important mining and industrial districts. On the last day of the year they claimed the capture of Kuantan, on the east coast, and thence their forces thrust southward also.

The western columns had reached Malacca by the middle of January, and new invading forces were landed north and south of the Muar River. The enemy was now in Johore State, little more than 50 miles north of Singapore island. By the last week of the month heavy fighting was taking place south of Kluang (see next map).

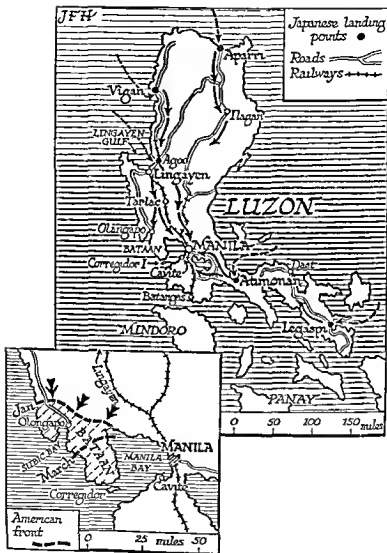
From 5th January onwards Singapore itself was persistently raided from the air, at first by night, then in daylight in full force.



The Fall of Singapore—

On the last day of January all the British forces were evacuated from the Malayan mainland and had crossed the causeway to Singapore Island. During the next few days the Japanese made landings west and east of the causeway, at either extremity of the island's northern shore. By the 14th fighting was going on in the region of the railway south of Bukit Panjang and near the reservoirs. On the 15th the General in Command at Singapore accepted the enemy's demand for unconditional surrender. Britain's most important base in the East had gone and the gateway to the Indian Ocean lay open.

In a broadcast made the same day Mr. Churchill declared that he was speaking "under the shadow of a heavy and far-reaching military defeat." Mr. Curtin, the Australian Prime Minister, described the fall of Singapore as "Australia's Dunkirk."



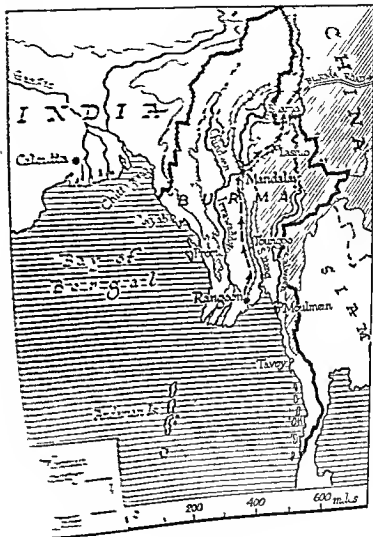
Resistance in the Philippines—

JAPANESE advances in Luzon had been rapid during December, and in the first week of January Manila and the American base at Cavite Bay fell to the invaders. The American forces under General MacArthur withdrew to the Bataan Peninsula, on the north-western side of Manila Bay; and held on at Corregidor Island and other small island forts commanding the Bay's entrance. They maintained their resistance against all attacks, and against various attempts at landing made by the Japanese, for more than three months; fighting for every yard of the peninsula and only withdrawing to Corregidor Island on 9th April owing to the "complete physical exhaustion of the men." For another month they held out on Corregidor, finally surrendering on 6th May. On the 9th, five months after the war had begun, Japanese warships were able to enter Manila harbour for the first time. In all this fighting, and at various other places in the islands, the Filipinos themselves fought heroically against the invaders—a striking contrast to the indifference of the masses of the people in Malaya, the East Indies, and Burma.

General MacArthur had left Bataan by motor-boat during March, eluding enemy pursuit and making successful rendezvous with a plane which carried him to Australia.

Conquest of the Indies—

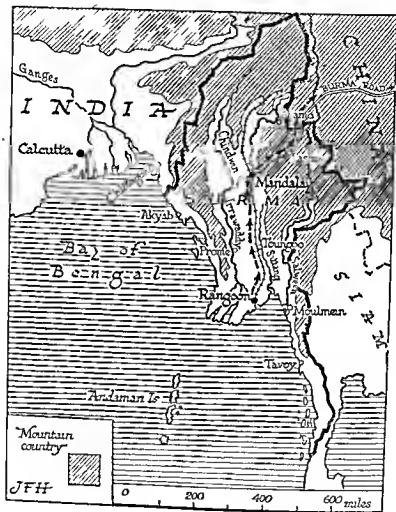
JAPANESE penetration and conquest of the Dutch East Indies was, save for Java, practically complete by the end of February. The chief successive stages (see numbers on map) were : (1) seizure of Terakan Island, a rich oil centre off the east coast of Dutch Borneo ; (2) landing on the Minahassa Peninsula, the northern extremity of Celebes ; (3) landing at Balikpapan, Borneo ; (4) sea battle in the Macassar Strait ; (5) attack on Amboina, the Dutch naval base in the eastern zone of the islands—capture not completed until a month later, 26th February ; (6) heavy raids on Palembang, the oil centre of southern Sumatra, followed by landings ; (7) landing at Macassar, southern Celebes ; (8) sea battle off Bali, followed by Japanese landing ; (9) seizure of Portuguese Timor, and capture of nearest aerodrome to Australia ; (10) naval battle in the Java Sea ends in annihilation of Allied fleet ; (11) invasion of Java.



The Capture of Java—

JAVA, richest and most densely populated island of the Dutch East Indies, and the seat of government, was invaded by the Japanese at three separate points on its northern coast on the last day of February : at Bantam, a few miles west of the capital, Batavia ; at Indramayu, 100 miles east of that town , and at Rembang, 110 miles west of Surabaya, the Dutch naval base. A day or two later the government left Batavia for Bandoeng, and Batavia was declared an open city. By 7th March the government had to flee from Bandoeng, the Governor-General and many of his staff escaping by air to Australia. On the 9th the Japanese were in occupation of both Bandoeng and Surabaya, and the Tokyo radio announced that the whole of the Dutch East Indies was under Japanese control. Actually, fighting continued in southern Sumatra for another two weeks ; and some small Dutch forces were still carrying on resistance in central Java during April.

The *Times* correspondent previously in Java wrote (10th March) : " The tragedy of Java is simply a continuation of the tragedy of Malaya. . . . The same factors were operative in both. . . . In both, the people of the country where the war was being fought did not regard the conflict as being personally their own."



The Conquest of Burma (I)—

WHILE their forces were still advancing towards Singapore at the southern extremity of the Malay Peninsula, other Japanese columns struck westward from Siam to attack Burma. From the enemy point of view the importance of Burma was threefold: (1) its conquest would establish him and give him naval bases in the Indian Ocean; (2) it was an essential jumping-off place for an invasion of India; (3) by taking Rangoon, port of the Burma Road, he would be enabled to strike a heavy blow at China, since this route had been China's most important supply line ever since her Pacific coasts and ports had been occupied or blockaded by him. *

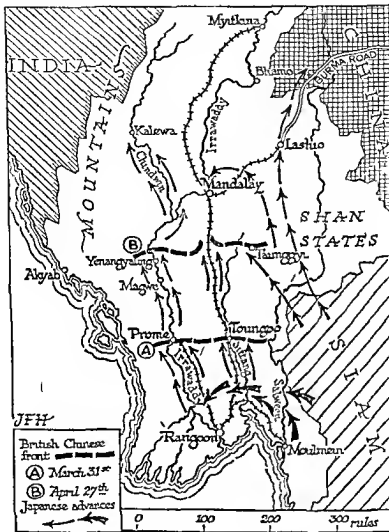
The geography of the country is indicated in this map. A number of river valleys running north and north-eastward, parallel to each other—Salween, Sittang, Irrawaddy, Chindwin—are separated by mountain highlands, the southern spurs of the great mountain-mass of south-eastern Asia. The railway from Rangoon to Mandalay, and thence north-east to Lashio, constituted the western end of the Burma Road.

The Conquest of Burma (2)—

THE port and air-base of Tavoy fell to the Japanese on 18th January. By the 31st they had advanced to Moulmein, and the British fell back northward. By 9th February the invading forces were crossing the Salween River, and a fortnight later the British were withdrawing to the western bank of the Sittang. The Japanese followed, striking directly west towards the Rangoon-Prome railway, so cutting off Pegu and Rangoon, which was evacuated on 7th March. The Pegu garrison cut its way out and joined the main British force, now retiring northward up the Irrawaddy valley, in the direction of Prome.

General Chiang Kai-shek had appointed his chief of staff, General Stillwell, U.S. Army, to the command of Chinese forces in Burma. These armies were now moving southward down the Sittang and Salween valleys.

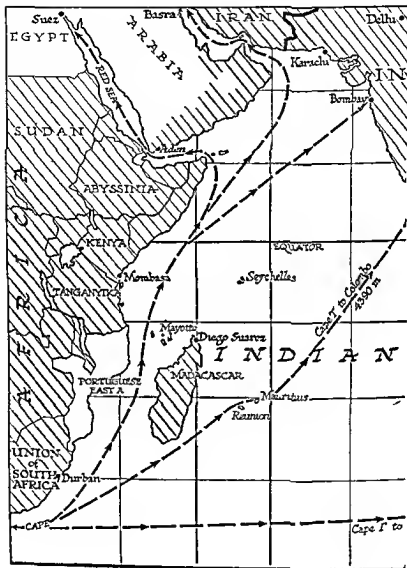
On the 23rd March the Japanese occupied the Andaman Islands, 300 miles south-west of Rangoon. The British garrison had been withdrawn some days previously.



The Conquest of Burma (3)—

By the end of March the retreating British forces had reached Prome, and were in line with the Chinese armies in the Toungoo region, on the Sittang. During April continuous fighting went on, the Japanese steadily forcing their way up the Irrawaddy towards the oil-fields of Yenangyaung. A British force surrounded here was relieved by Chinese troops coming from the north. The Chinese on the Sittang front were pressed back to Taunggyi. New Japanese forces struck directly from the Siamese border, across the Shan States, to Lashio, rail-head for the Burma Road. Thence they were able to move south-west to Mandalay, in the rear of the main Chinese armies. Meantime the British were withdrawing up the Chindwin valley, whence they were able to cross by mountain roads into Assam (India).

The story of Burma had repeated the story of Malaya and Java. General Alexander estimated that of the total Burmese population 10 per cent. were pro-British, 10 per cent. pro-Japanese, and the remainder indifferent. U Saw, the Burmese Premier, who had visited London and had interviews with Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery in the latter part of 1941, was detained and interned by the British Government on his way back to Burma shortly before the Japanese invasion of the country began.



Indian Ocean—



(See next page)

The Enemy in the Indian Ocean—

THE Japanese conquest of Malaya and the islands of the Dutch East Indies, followed by the taking of Burma, opened up the whole north-eastern area of the Indian Ocean, from Rangoon to Timor, to the invaders, and gave them possession of all the main gateways between that ocean and the Pacific. A great arc of enemy-occupied territory now stretched from the borders of India itself to the islands immediately north of Australia. And despite the lengthening line of their communications, the Japanese were still at an advantage in this respect as compared with either Britain or America.

Not only did their westward advance directly threaten India, but it was an immediate menace to the vital Allied lines of communication and supply in the Indian Ocean. These included not only the routes to India from the west, and the line connecting India with Australia, but the main route from Britain and America round the Cape of Good Hope and up the eastern coast of Africa to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf—the supply line for Egypt and for southern Russia. The cutting of this line would mean that the Axis forces, Hitler in the west and the Japanese in the east, had in effect joined hands, and could thenceforth operate in direct communication with each other.

While fighting was still going on in Burma the Japanese air force struck at Ceylon, and at towns on the Indian coast (see later map). They sank an Australian

destroyer in the Bay of Bengal, and the British cruisers *Dorsetshire* and *Cornwall*, and the aircraft-carrier *Hermes*, off the Ceylon coast. But after April there was comparatively little further naval activity. Early in June it was announced from Cape Town that three Allied merchant ships had been sunk off the east coast of South Africa.

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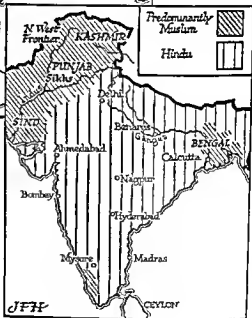
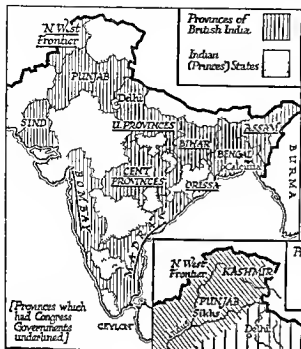
On 5th June it was announced that the largest military convoy which had ever left Great Britain had arrived in India without the loss of a single ship, man, or gun.



The Threat to India—

DURING the first week in April the Japanese air force delivered two heavy attacks on Ceylon; on Colombo (5th April) and Trincomalee (9th). In the first some 75 planes took part; of these 27 were destroyed, 5 probably destroyed, and 25 damaged. In the Trincomalee raid the defence again made the invaders pay heavily, destroying 21 planes and 12 probables.

On 6th April smaller raids were made on Vizagapatam and Cocanada, on the coast of India north of Madras, but at neither place was serious damage done.

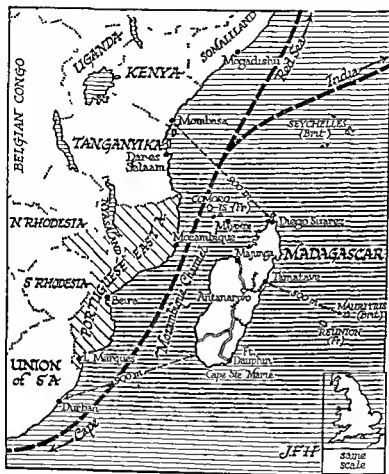


India a Nation?—

ON 22nd March Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in India as the special representative of the British War Cabinet, to discuss with Indian leaders proposals setting out "finally and with precision the practical steps which H.M. Government propose as the method of fulfilling their past promises of self-government to the Indian peoples." The plan included the grant of Dominion Status to British India, and the calling of a constituent assembly immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, to frame a new constitution; it proposed that any Province should have the right to secede from the Dominion and be entitled to separate independence (an attempt to meet the opposition of the Muslim League to inclusion in a predominantly Hindu State); and it reserved for the British Government, so long as the war lasted, "control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort."

Lengthy discussions with the Indian political leaders took place. The plan was finally rejected by the Congress Party, the Muslim League, the Sikhs, and the Hindu Mahasabha; while the Indian Moderates declared that without very considerable amendment it was unsatisfactory.

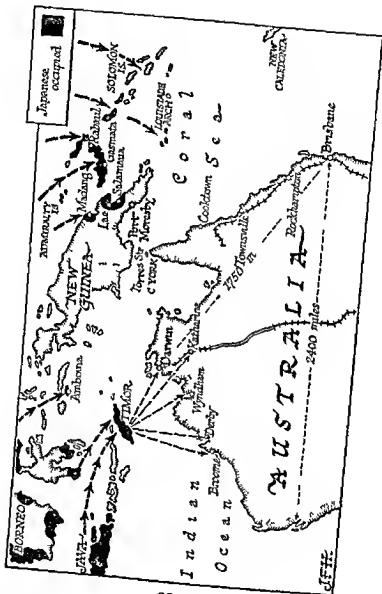
On 13th April Sir Stafford Cripps left India for England.



The Occupation of Madagascar—

THE British occupation of the northern part of the island of Madagascar (part of the Vichy French empire) aimed primarily at preventing the naval base of Diego Suarez, important by reason of its proximity to the Cape route to Suez and India, from being used by the enemy. The French garrison resisted, but after three days of fighting during which a French auxiliary cruiser and a submarine were sunk, Diego was surrendered.

Early in June it was reported that the British had occupied points 200 miles south of Diego, and a month later the island of Mayotte, in the Comoro Islands, midway between Madagascar and the African coast, had also been seized.



The Threat to Australia—

SOME time before their conquest of the Dutch East Indies was completed the Japanese struck farther east, at the islands beyond New Guinea, to the north-east of Australia. During the last week in January they landed at Rabaul (New Britain) and at Madang and Lae (British New Guinea); a little later they occupied Gasmata (New Britain), Salamaua (New Guinea), and various points in the Solomon Islands and the Louisiade Archipelago. Port Moresby, on the southern coast of New Guinea, opposite Cape York, the northernmost tip of Australia, was firmly held by the Australian forces.

Continuous air warfare was carried on throughout the whole area, the Royal Australian Air Force, assisted by United States aircraft, steadily bombing the enemy bases in New Guinea, New Britain, and the Solomons; while the Japanese persistently raided Port Moresby and Australia's northern base, Darwin, and also bombed Broome, Derby, and Wyndham, on the coast, and Katherine, 200 miles inland. Sydney Harbour was attacked by midget submarines, all of which were destroyed, on 1st June.



The Battle of the Coral Sea—

THE Japanese received a heavy blow when, early in May, they sent a strong naval force into the Coral Sea, between the Solomon Islands and N.E. Australia. It was sighted near the Solomons, but whether making for New Caledonia or for the Australian coast is not known. A four-day battle with American ships and planes ensued, the later stages of which were fought nearer to the Queensland coast. Allied headquarters stated that the Japanese had lost an aircraft-carrier, a heavy and a light cruiser, two destroyers, four gunboats, and two supply ships. The air arm played a larger part in the fighting than in any previous naval battle. Later reports from America told how a large part of the Japanese fleet was discovered at anchor in a harbour in the Solomons, and fourteen out of fifteen warships and transports were destroyed by American dive-bombers and torpedo-planes. Pearl Harbour was to some extent avenged.

Speaking later in the Australian Parliament, Mr. Curtin declared that the Battle of the Coral Sea had averted the immediate threat to Australia.

the Pacific—



(See next page)

The War in the Pacific—

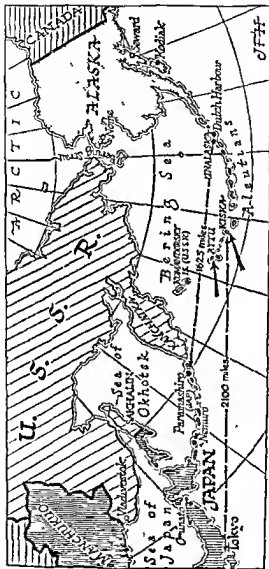
AUSTRALIA and the whole south-west Pacific forms part of the war zone for which the United States has undertaken chief control and responsibility. Maintenance of the main Pacific routes between America and Australia is therefore of supreme importance—the mid-ocean route from Hawaii to Samoa, Fiji, and New Caledonia, and the southern one from Panama. Japanese pressure south-eastward to the Solomon Islands, and eastward to Midway, is obviously aimed at threatening these great lines of supply and communication. The Pacific War Council held its first meeting in Washington on 1st April.

On 1st February the U.S. Navy delivered its first counter-attack by making a sea and air raid on Japanese bases in the Marshall and Gilbert Islands. Later that month and early in March similar action was carried out on Wake and Marcus Islands. Meantime U.S. submarines were busy in Japanese waters, sinking transports near the Carolines and farther east in the China Sea (see previous map), which probably prevented an attack in force by the Japanese against the western end of the supply routes.

This battle was followed by another major success on 4th June, when the Japanese threw very heavy forces into an attack on Midway Island, north-western outpost of Hawaii. The attack had been anticipated by the American naval command, and U.S. ships and planes were there to meet the enemy. Admiral Nimitz, U.S. Navy, reported "very heavy damage indeed" to the

Japanese fleet, including four aircraft-carriers, with their planes and men.

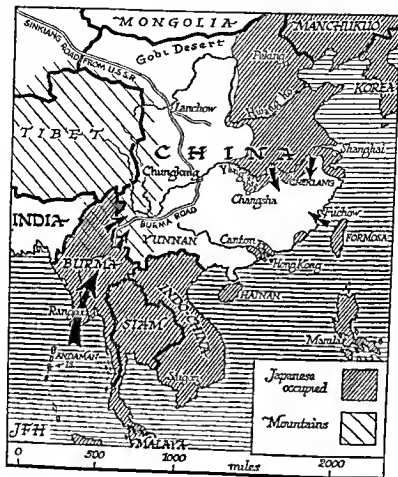
In the far north of the Pacific a Japanese attack was made on Dutch Harbour on 3rd June, and there were small enemy landings on two of the smaller westernmost islands. Farther east, however, Japanese warships were bombed and sunk.



Alaska and the North Pacific Zone—

THE long chain of the Aleutian Islands, stretching westward from the southern tip of Alaska, carries U S territory across the narrower North Pacific to within 800 miles of the most northerly Japanese possessions. The main base in the Aleutians is at Dutch Harbour, raided by the Japanese on 3rd June, and other bases are at Kiska and Kodiak. The Japanese landed small forces on Attu and Kiska in June.

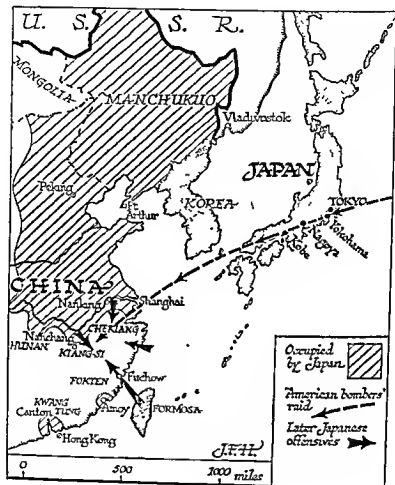
Alaska itself has no direct land communication—road or rail—with the U S. Work on a great Alaska highway, running across Canada, was begun this year.



Sixth Year in China—

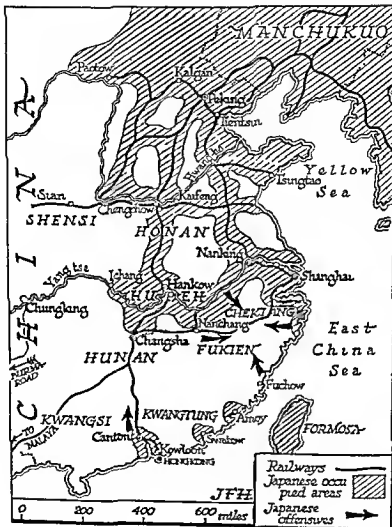
ON July 7, 1942, China entered upon the sixth year of her struggle with the Japanese invader. Up to the end of 1941 the casualties among her armed forces were estimated at 6 millions ; and that figure does not include the millions of peasants starved, massacred, or killed by war-time disease.

The Japanese conquest of Burma was one of the severest blows China has had to suffer. The whole of the Chinese coastline is either occupied by the Japanese or subject to their blockade. The Burma Road—the “back way” into China—was her one unhampered communication with the outer world ; for the Sinkiang Road from Russia can ensure only limited supplies, and the alternative routes from India, *via* Tibet, have still in the main to be constructed. Mr Churchill's undertaking to extend to China “every material, moral, and spiritual help in our power” would seem to entail the re-taking of Burma at the earliest possible opportunity.



Bombs on Tokyo—

ON 18th April American bombers raided Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, and Kobe, thus for the first time taking the war to Japan's home bases. The planes went on westward, and landed in China. Shortly afterwards the Japanese began a concerted drive to extend their area of conquest in Chekiang, the nearest province of unoccupied China to Japanese territory, and therefore an area from which Japan could be effectively raided. They struck south and south-east from Nanchang and the Yangtse, and westward from the coast with freshly landed forces. Fighting went on in all these areas, but up to the end of June the Japanese had made little progress.



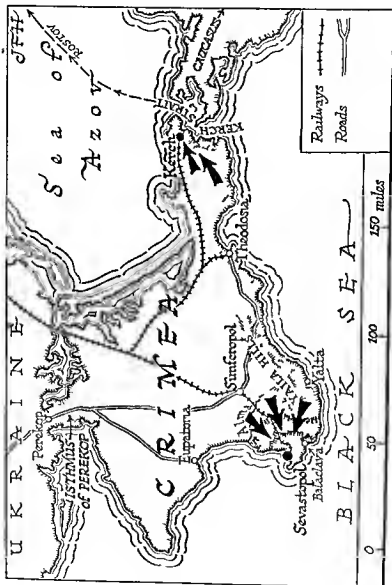
China: the Struggle for Railways—

As well as aiming at the conquest of Chekiang, in order to prevent the use of Chinese aerodromes for Allied raids on Japan, Japanese attacks in China during May and June were clearly directed at gaining control of the railway from Shanghai, through Nanchang and Changsha, to Indo-China and Malaya. This would give them a direct land supply line extending from north to south of their mainland conquests—from north China to Singapore. The operations in Chekiang cover a part of this line. An offensive was also launched northward from Canton.



Japan's Threat to the U.S.S.R.—

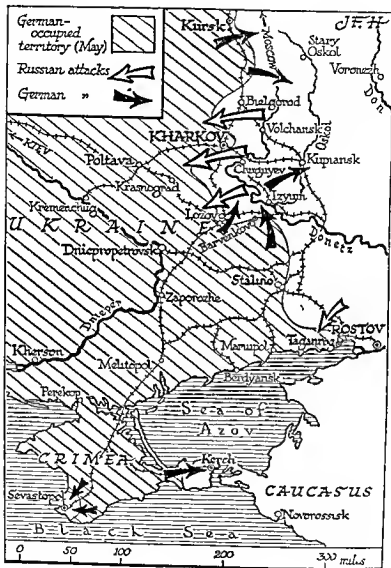
REPORTS from China during June emphasized the increasing concentration of Japanese land and air forces in Manchukuo, especially near U S S R frontier. Since their penetration of Manchukuo ten years ago the Japanese have constructed a network of strategic railways connected with their bases at Port Arthur, Chinkai, and Rashin. Manchukuo is a giant wedge driven into far-eastern Soviet territory, and a Japanese offensive would presumably aim at cutting off the coastal province and the ports of Vladivostok, Sovietskaya, and Nikolaevsk, and so neutralizing any possible Russian action in the Pacific.



The Fall of Sevastopol—

AFTER a siege lasting eight months, during the last two of which it was subjected to practically unceasing mass bombing and artillery assault, Sevastopol fell on 2nd July. The Russians estimated that the Germans lost during the siege some 300,000 men, killed and wounded, half of these during the last few weeks. During the heroic defence of the town its citizens had organized communal life in rock catacombs. Reinforcements of men and supplies were brought in by sea. A large part of the civilian population was evacuated by sea during the final weeks.

On 11th May the Germans launched an attack on the Kerch Peninsula, at the eastern end of the Crimea. After two weeks of stubborn fighting the Russians withdrew across the Strait.



Timoshenko's Kharkov Offensive—

AFTER a period during which the whole Russian front was bogged into immobility by the spring thaws, Marshal Timoshenko carried out an attack on a hundred-mile front north and south of Kharkov, in the second week in May. North of the city the advance was made from the region of Bielgorod and Volchansk, to the south, from Chuguyev towards Krasnograd.

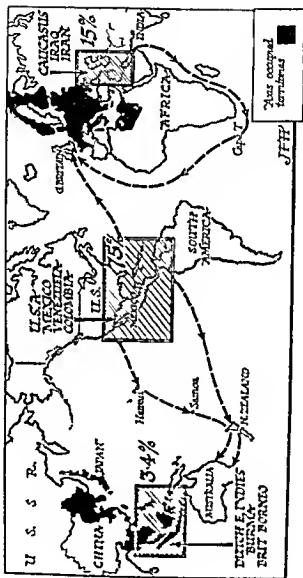
The Germans under von Bock counter-attacked on the south-east of this front in the Barvenkovo-Izyum sector, aiming at cutting off the Russian armies west of the Donetz. Then, after a short lull in which German energies appeared to be concentrated on the final reduction of Sevastopol, von Bock's armies again took the offensive from Kursk towards Stary Oskol, and south-east of Kharkov towards Kupiansk, both of which towns stand on the river Oskol, a tributary of the Donetz.



Von Bock's drive to the Don—

At the beginning of July von Bock's attacks on either side of Kharkov developed into a full scale offensive drive towards the Don and the important Moscow-Rostov railway. The German armies striking from Kursk reached Voronezh, and farther south fierce fighting in the Donetz Basin carried the enemy as far as Rossosh, near the Don 120 miles south of Voronezh. The long delayed German 1942 offensive had at last begun, and Moscow described the position after the first few days as "exceptionally grave."

In the last week of the month Soviet headquarters announced the fall of Rostov. Von Bock, with a tremendous concentration of armoured forces and aircraft, pressed southward towards the Caucasus.

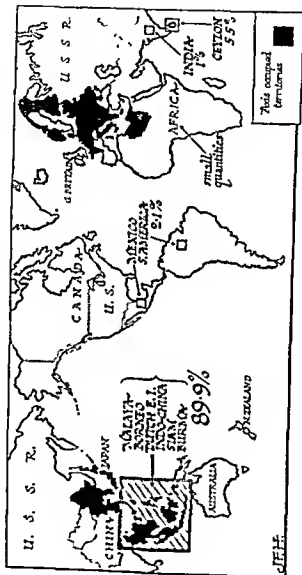


The Struggle for Oil—

THE German drive in south Russia in June-July was clearly aimed at cutting off the Red Armies and the Soviet industrial machine from their basic oil supplies in the Caucasus-Caspian zone.

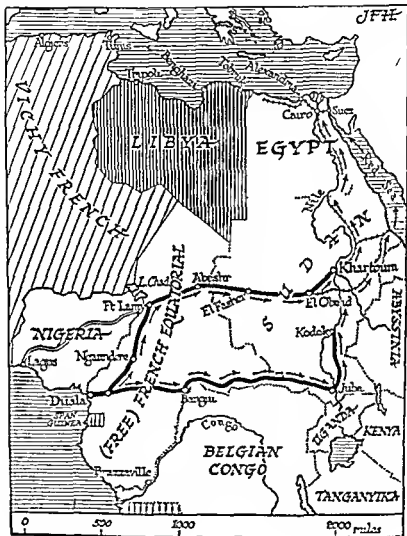
The map shows the three great oil-producing areas of the world, with the percentage of world production in each. As will be noted, the U.S.-Central-South American field is vastly the most important; and the keeping open of supply lines from that field east and west is a primary consideration in Atlantic and Pacific strategy.

The far-eastern field is now in Japanese possession. But its output was very considerably reduced by the scorched earth policy carried out by the Dutch in the East Indies and the British in Burma, before the loss of those areas to the enemy.



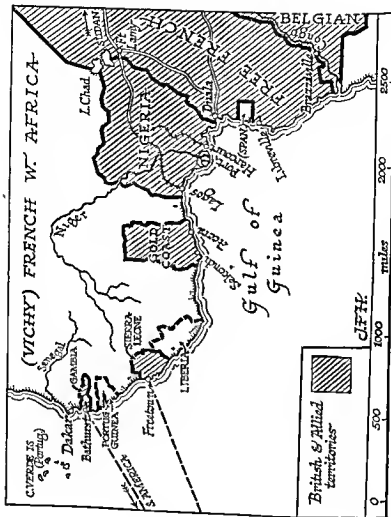
Allied Losses of Rubber—

IF the Allies have an enormous advantage in control of oil resources, the Axis—or at any rate the Japanese half of it—now monopolizes the main rubber-producing area of the world. Malaya furnished 41 per cent of the total world production, and the Dutch East Indies 33 per cent, while Burma, Borneo, Indo-China, and Siam brought the total yield of this area up to 89.9 per cent. The most prolific field outside the Japanese zone is Ceylon, with 5.5 per cent. Germany is entirely cut off from all rubber-producing areas. She manufactures a certain amount of synthetic rubber, as does the U S S R.



Trans-African Supply Roads—

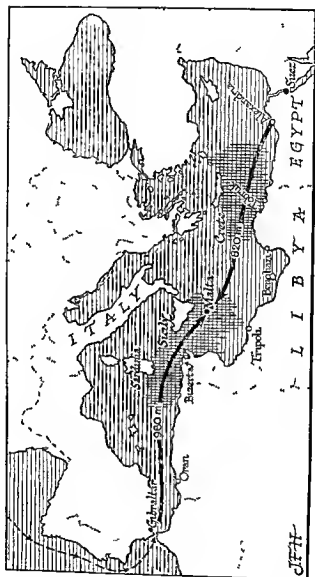
THE Japanese threat to Indian Ocean communications made all the more important the alternative overland route across Africa, from the Atlantic to the Red Sea and the Middle East. Two motor highways from Duala, in Free (Fighting) French Africa, have been completed ; one running north, parallel with the Nigerian border, to Fort Lamy, and thence eastward to El Obeid and Khartoum ; the other running due east along the border of the Belgian Congo to Juba, on the White Nile. The use of these routes means a 2,000-mile land journey, as compared with the 10,000-mile sea-route round the Cape.



West African Colonies—

THE general strategic situation, particularly since the fall of France and the growth of collaborationist tendencies at Vichy, have lent a new importance to the British West African colonies—the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, and Nigeria. Their key position on the Atlantic has been still further emphasized since the entry of the U.S. into the war. Economically the territories are of war-time importance, and co-ordination is now necessary between them and the adjoining Allied territories of Free French Equatorial Africa and the Belgian Congo.

On 8th June Lord Swinton was appointed Minister-Resident in West Africa, with Cabinet rank.

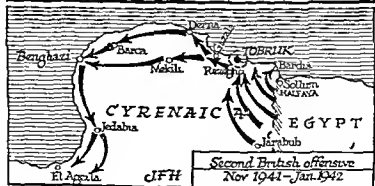
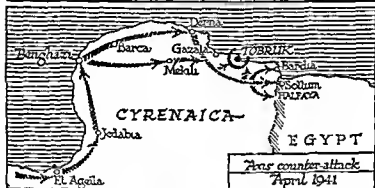
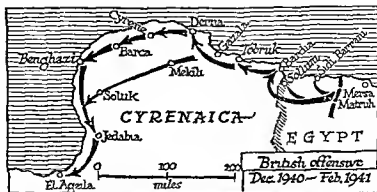


Convoys in the Mediterranean—

THE war in the Mediterranean during the first six months of 1942 centred on the running of Axis convoys from Italy and Greece to Libya, and of British convoys from Gibraltar or Suez to Malta. Aircraft, submarines, and warships on both sides waged unceasing warfare, the chief zones of activity being the "narrows" between Sardinia, Sicily, and the African coast, and between Crete and the Libyan and Egyptian coastline.

Early in June two large British convoys sailed for Malta, one eastward from Gibraltar, the other westward from Alexandria. Both had to face very heavy attacks from superior enemy naval and air forces. The Gibraltar convoy got through, the Alexandria fleet, after successfully delivering supplies at Tobruk, had to turn back. In the course of the three-day battles an Italian heavy cruiser was sunk.

Throughout the whole half-year enemy raids on Malta were almost continuous, as many as twelve or fourteen alerts a day being normal. On 7th April the 2,000th alert of the war was sounded in the island.

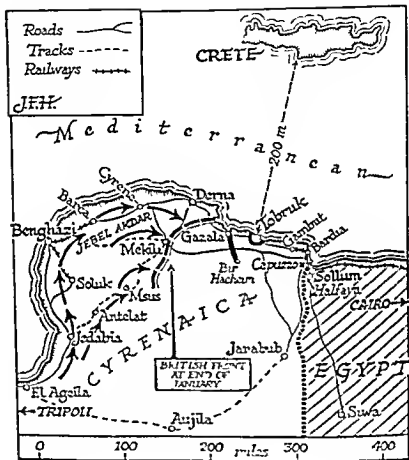


Swaying Fortunes in Libya—

THE first British offensive against the Italians in Egypt and Libya was launched in December, 1940, from positions a little west of Mersa Matruh. In the course of a two-months' campaign the Italian army in Cyrenaica was completely shattered.

In April, 1941, after British and Australian forces had been transferred to the Greek front, an Axis counter-offensive, with German troops taking the leading part, won back all Cyrenaica. The British held on to Tobruk, and occupied positions just inside the Egyptian frontier.

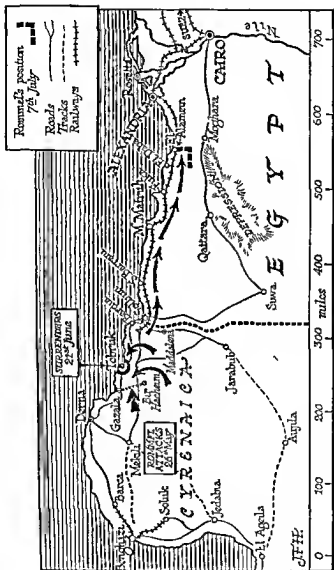
In November, 1941, the British, now under command of General Auchinleck, again took the offensive. Tobruk was relieved, and by early January General Rommel had been pushed back as far as El Agaila. (See following maps.)



Rommel Strikes Back—

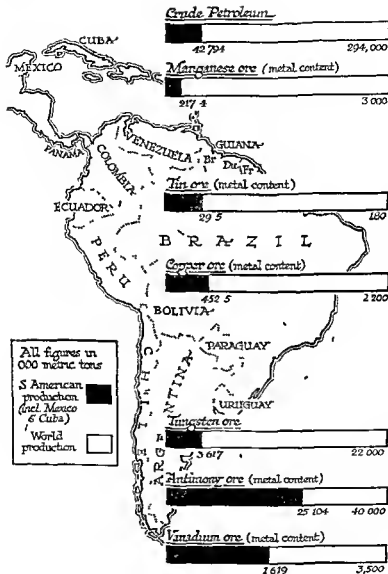
IN the third week of January Rommel counter-attacked north of El Ageila. He speedily re-took Jedabia, and in another six days was in Benghazi. On 4th February the British evacuated Derna, and a day or two later withdrew to a line running south from Gazala. For nearly four months, until the last week of May, the position remained static. Activities were confined to patrol warfare, but there was intensive air-raiding on either side.

On 26th May Rommel launched a heavy attack on the British positions. His armoured forces struck south of Bir Hacheim and turned northward, behind the British defence zone, through which they forced two gaps to serve as supply lines. Two weeks of furious fighting in "the Cauldron," east of the British line, followed. After a desperate resistance by the Free French garrison, Bir Hacheim was evacuated. On 13th June a battle took place in which the British armoured forces were heavily defeated. The 8th Army withdrew to the Egyptian frontier, leaving a strong garrison in Tobruk, which however surrendered after one day's heavy attack, on 21st June (see next map).



Invasion of Egypt—

THE British 8th Army was unable to stand on the Egyptian frontier. Three days after the fall of Tobruk Rommel's forces had reached a point beyond Sidi Barrani. On 27th June there was heavy fighting at Mersa Matruh, and on the last day of the month the Germans were at El Daba. The 8th Army, reinforced, waited for them in positions stretching south from El Alamein to the Qattara Depression (about 60 miles west of Alexandria), and there held them. By 7th July Rommel's southern flank was being extended westward. His air force was bombing Alexandria heavily.

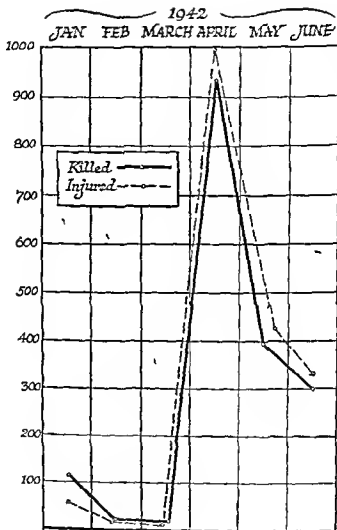


Mineral Resources of Latin America—

THE mineral resources of the Latin American States are an important addition to the war strength of the Allies. The absence of coal in the South American continent is an obstacle to its extensive industrialization. Its minerals will probably therefore be most effectively developed as raw materials for the heavy industry of the U.S. Now that the tin of Malaya is lost to the Allies, it is probable that the mines of Bolivia will assume a new importance.

(The figure for petroleum production on the map does not include the 2,844,000 metric tons which come annually from the British island of Trinidad)

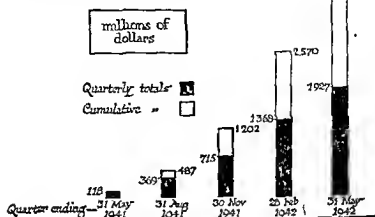
Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela broke off relations with the Axis a few days after the U.S. declaration of war in December 1941. At the Rio de Janeiro Conference (January 1942) all the South American States agreed to treat the U.S. as a non-belligerent, while Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Peru, and Ecuador broke off all relations with Germany and Japan. The Argentine Republic and Chile still remained neutral.



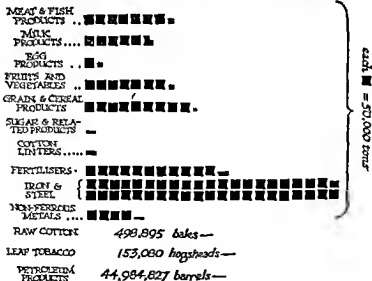
Civilian Casualties in Air Raids—

In comparing this diagram with those in Vols IV and V it should be noted that here the table only goes up to 1,000, whereas in the previous diagrams the top figures were 11,000 and 7,000. The highest monthly total during the first half of 1942 was in April (the month of the 'Bredaker' raids)—938 killed and 998 injured. (In April, 1941, the killed numbered over 6,000 and the injured nearly 7,000.)

Total aid —
1st March, 1941 — 31st May, 1942



Non-military goods transferred in first year —
1st March, 1941 — 28th Feb, 1942



Lease-Lend Aid—

A DIAGRAM in Volume IV of the Atlas-History showed why the passing of the Lease-Lend Act was necessary in order that Great Britain's purchases in the United States might be maintained. Since the Act became law on March 11, 1941, it has been applied to thirty-five countries in addition to the British Commonwealth of Nations, and this diagram shows the value of the total aid that has been given up to the end of last May. It only shows the value of goods that have actually been transferred or are ready for transfer, and services, such as the repair of ships and the training of pilots, which have actually been given. It does not include the value of the vast number of contracts which have been placed but which have not been completed.

Military items now account for more than half of lease-lend aid. Nevertheless, considerable quantities of non-military goods are also transferred, and the second half of the diagram shows the amounts of the more important of these which were transferred in the first year of the Act's operation. Iron and steel for munitions production were the biggest item, but large quantities of food were also transferred—as the British public knows from its introduction to American tinned meats.

Walt Whitman, ninety years ago, had a vision of present day America—

Shapes of factories, arsenals, foundries, markets,
Shapes of the two-threaded tracks of railroads,
Shapes of the sleepers of bridges, vast frameworks,
girders, arches,
Shapes of the fleets of barges, tows, lake and canal
craft, river craft
Ship-yards and dry docks along the Eastern and
Western Seas, and in many a bay and by-place

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